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Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

NOV 24 1999

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of)	
)	
)	DA 99-1893
Amendment of Section 73.622(b))	MM Docket No. 99-289
Table of Allotments)	RM-9668
Digital Television Broadcast Stations)	
(Champaign, Illinois))	

**REPLY COMMENTS OF MCLEODUSA TELECOMMUNICATIONS
SERVICES, INC. AND SECOND REQUEST FOR PROCEDURAL RELIEF**

McLeodUSA Telecommunications Services, Inc. ("McLeodUSA"),
pursuant to Sections 1.415 and 1.420 of the Commission's Rules, hereby files its
reply comments on the Notice of Proposed Rule Making in the above-captioned
proceeding and reiterates its request for relief from the *ex parte* restrictions
governing this proceeding. 1/

1/ *Amendment of Section 73.622(b), Table of Allotments, Digital Television
Broadcast Stations (Champaign, Illinois), MM Docket No. 99-289, RM-9668, Notice
of Proposed Rule Making, DA 99-1893 (rel. September 20, 1999) ("NPRM").*

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The Commission should deny the request of Midwest Television, Inc. ("Midwest") to substitute DTV Channel 5 for station WCIA(TV)'s assigned DTV Channel 48 in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois because the substitution would eliminate, or cause harmful interference to, essential public safety communications and FCC-licensed paging operations in the Champaign-Urbana vicinity. 2/ These public interest concerns outweigh MidWest's stated justification for the substitution, which is to "avoid[] the need to build a new tower." 3/

2/ See *Comments of McLeodUSA Telecommunications Services, Inc.*, filed November 9, 1999 at 4-6 and Appendix A (*inter alia*, the proposed substitution would prevent McLeodUSA from providing paging services to 70% of all hospitals and health care organizations in the Champaign-Urbana vicinity); *Comments of Macon County, Illinois*, filed November 9, 1999 at 2 (the proposed substitution would cause the Sheriff's police to lose access to communications); *Comments of Moultrie County Sheriff's Office*, filed November 8, 1999 at 2 (the proposed substitution would prevent reliable communications between the county Sheriff's office and law enforcement, including law enforcement contracted by the Army Corp of Engineers to provide surveillance to the federally-owned Lake Shelby area); *Comments of Dewitt County Sheriff's Office*, filed November 8, 1999 at 1 (the proposed substitution would cause interference to the Sheriff's office's main law enforcement frequency); *Comments of Illinois Signal Communications*, filed November 5, 1999 at 2 (the proposed substitution would cause all of Illinois Signal's paging activities in the Champaign area for 25 miles in every direction to cease, including service to hospitals, hospital emergency rooms, physicians, fire departments, police and sheriff departments, ambulance districts, and disaster relief agencies).

3/ See *Comments of MidWest Television, Inc.*, filed November 9, 1999 at 2.

In addition, in light of the serious public safety and other public interest concerns raised in comments filed by public safety entities and paging providers, the Commission should open this proceeding to enable full exploration of the interference issues associated with the substitution of DTV Channel 5 for DTV Channel 48. 4/ The Commission should recognize that its streamlined rulemaking procedures for adjusting the Television Table of Allotments are inappropriate here. 5/ Unlike similar DTV channel change requests, the relief requested by MidWest would shut down or impair essential communications capabilities of almost all public service and health-related organizations located in the Champaign-Urbana region.

In the alternative, McLeodUSA requests that the parties commenting in this proceeding be provided an opportunity to reply to any attempt on behalf of MidWest to address the serious public safety and interference concerns raised by the numerous parties commenting in this proceeding. Thus far, MidWest has not responded to these comments, but it may do so in the reply comment round of pleadings due on November 24, 1999. McLeodUSA and other parties filing

4/ See *Comments of McLeodUSA* filed November 9, 1999 at 8-9.

5/ See 47 C.F.R. §§ 1.1208, 1.420.

comments in this proceeding must not be denied an opportunity to reply to MidWest's position on these vital interference issues.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons stated above, the Commission should deny Midwest's proposal to substitute DTV Channel 5 for DTV Channel 48 in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, and should grant the requested procedural relief.

Respectfully submitted,

McLeodUSA Telecommunications
Services, Inc.

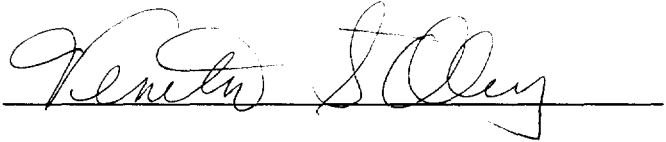
A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michele C. Farquhar".

Michele C. Farquhar
Counsel for McLeodUSA
Telecommunications Services, Inc.
Hogan & Hartson L.L.P.
555 Thirteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Dated: November 24, 1999

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Venita S. Otey, hereby certify that on this 24th day of November, 1999, a copy of the foregoing McLeodUSA Telecommunications Services, Inc. Reply Comments in Response to Midwest Television's Request to Substitute Channel 5 for Station WCIA(TV)'s Assigned DTV Channel 48 in Champaign, Illinois, was sent by first class U.S. mail to the following:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Venita S. Otey", is written over a horizontal line.

Dated: November 24, 1999

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